

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-7, and 17-21 are all the claims pending in the application. By this Amendment, Applicant cancels the rejected claims 1, 3-7, 19, and 20 and rewrites claims 17, 18, and 21 into their independent form.

I. Preliminary Matter

As a preliminary matter, the Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge Applicant's claim to foreign priority and indicate receipt of the certified copy of the priority document filed on March 26, 2001.

II. Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1, 3-7, and 19-21 presently stand rejected. Claims 17, 18, and 21 contain allowable subject matter.

III. Claim Rejections

The Examiner contends that claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph and claims 20 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. It is respectfully submitted that claim 20 has been canceled and claim 21 is rewritten into its independent form and is clearly supportable by the specification *e.g.*, ¶¶ 48, 56, and 57. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw this rejection of claims 20 and 21 and to now allow claim 21.

IV. Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1, 4-7, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,600,713 to Tognazzini (hereinafter "Tognazzini") and claim 3 is rejected under 35

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U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tognazzini in view of Official Notice. Applicant respectfully submits that the rejected claims 1, 4-7, and 19 have been canceled. Thereby, these rejections are rendered moot.

V. Allowable Subject Matter


Claims 17, 18, and 21 contain allowable subject matter. By this Amendment, Applicant rewrites these claims into their independent form. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to now allow these claims.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. **If any points remain in issue, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact attorney the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.**

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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